

Request to Establish a Bachelor of Arts in Conflict and Peace Studies Degree Program at University of North Carolina at Greensboro

UNC Greensboro requests authorization to establish a B.A. in Conflict and Peace Studies degree program (CIP 30.0501).

Program Description

As an academic field of study, Peace and Conflict Studies is over 50 years old. This field has an active base of scholars, a growing body of disciplinary literature, an established curriculum, and a pedagogical tradition that includes classroom teaching, experiential learning, internships, and international study. It draws on the work and methodologies of sociology, psychology, anthropology, history, communications, social work, law, political science, philosophy, and other disciplines. Peace and conflict scholars and educators seek to understand the causes of conflict and examine ways to prevent and transform conflict situations. Peace and conflict studies courses cover a wide range of issues related to peace, conflict, violence, justice, inequality, social change, and human rights. In order to succeed in the field, students require knowledge of culturally sensitive conflict resolution processes and mastery of the skills needed to address complex conflicts. In this B.A. program, students will engage in learning the skills of mediation/negotiation, organizational conflict management, community building, and conflict transformation and peacebuilding within local, national, and international contexts. Graduates will be prepared with a broad foundation in the field, which will prepare them for entry level positions in the field or participation in a graduate program in peace and conflict studies. A total of 122 semester credit hours will be required to complete the degree program.

Mission Relevance

The focus of the UNCG Conflict and Peace Studies (CPS) Program is fully aligned with UNCG as a 21st Century University and with the UNCG Strategic Plan and its several strategic areas. Further, the Conflict and Peace Studies core values are aligned with the UNCG Core Values of inclusiveness, collaboration, sustainability, responsibility, and transparency. Conflict and Peace Studies is consistent with UNCG's institutional mission to prepare students for engaged citizenship, integrating intercultural and international experiences and perspectives, and to encourage innovative leadership meeting social, economic, and environmental challenges.

Student Demand

The demand for this degree program is demonstrated by the following: (1) interest in an undergraduate degree program has been expressed by the JFK Special Warfare Center located at Ft. Bragg (The JFK Center houses the U.S. Army's special warfare school. The Center's mission is to train and educate U.S. Army personnel for the Special Operations Command.); (2) the expressed interest of the UNCG Ashby Residential College in providing a peace studies focus for its curriculum; (3) the fact that in Fall 2011 and Fall 2012 trial undergraduate conflict and peace studies courses were well enrolled at UNCG; and (4) interest expressed by international students in residential UNCG courses in peace and conflict studies. In addition, local community colleges (in particular Rockingham, Randolph, and Alamance) offer related programs/courses that create a pool of potential transfer students for the proposed B.A. program.

Societal Demand and Opportunities for Program Graduates

Peace and conflict studies education prepares students for a wide variety of careers. Graduates become negotiators, mediators, government officials, educators, business people, activists, and professionals in organizations focused on human rights, dispute resolution, environmental protection, international law, and human and economic development. Conflict resolution is a growing field of professional practice with many applications (including, for example, in the health care arena where rapid changes are occurring). For 2011, *U.S. News & World Report* identifies mediator as one of the top-ten growth professions. While peace and conflict studies is a growing area of practice, it is underrepresented in the North Carolina university environment, as the only undergraduate peace and conflict studies program in the state exists at Guilford College.

Resource Implications

The B.A. in Conflict and Peace Studies degree will be housed in the UNCG Conflict and Peace Studies Program (within the School of Health and Human Sciences) which currently offers the Master of Arts in Conflict and Peace Studies degree. No new resources are needed, as two new full-time faculty positions have already been added in support of the program, beginning August 2013. No additional library resources or information technology support are required, and the program will utilize existing facilities and classrooms. One of the Program's faculty members will serve as the Director of the undergraduate program.

Collaborative Opportunities

UNCG Conflict and Peace Studies faculty collaborate with faculty at other colleges and universities where interest in peace studies exists among the faculty. This includes North Carolina A&T State University, Appalachian State University, and Guilford College. Growing potential exists in the development of collaborative relationships with community colleges, which are being explored. Study abroad opportunities are increasing, as the CPS program now has an exchange program with the University of Konstanz in Germany, and a study abroad program is being developed with Linnaeus University in Sweden.

Outcome of System-wide Review

Four disciplinary experts representing four UNC institutions responded to the survey questions concerning the proposed B.A. in Conflict and Peace Studies at UNCG. Two subject matter experts indicated no especial concerns regarding the proposed program, and the other two provided questions or comments regarding student demand, program requirements and curriculum, and faculty sufficiency and student support. UNC Greensboro responded to the questions and comments to UNC General Administration, and those responses are reflected in this summary.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve University of North Carolina at Greensboro's request to establish a B.A. in Conflict and Peace Studies degree program (CIP 30.0501) effective June 2013.